

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /064 W

-----050744 271915Z /47

R 271355Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8108

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 0655

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, AG

SUBJECT: STATUS OF ALGERIAN POLITICAL DETAINEES

1. IN LATE FEBRUARY, THERE HAS BEEN SLIGHT STIR OF INTEREST IN STATUS OF ALGERIA'S MOST PROMINENT POLITICAL PRISONER, FORMER PRESIDENT AHMED BEN BELLA. ACCORDING TO A REPORT APPEARING IN LONDON PUBLICATION DESTOUR AND REPRODUCED IN LE MONDE FEBRUARY 25, THE REGIME HERE HAD DECIDED TO TRANSFER BEN BELLA FROM DETENTION IN VILLA SOMEWHERE IN REGION OF BLIDA TO HOUSE ARREST IN VICINITY OF EL-ASNAM FARTHER TO EAST BETWEEN ALGIERS AND ORAN. MOVE WAS TO TAKE PLACE AFTER FLN CONGRESS IN MID-1978, ACCORDING TO DESTOUR. INFORMED OBSERVERS HERE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM DESTOUR REPORT BUT NOTE THAT SOME MEASURE OF CLEMENCY TOWARDS BEN BELLA HAS BEEN EXPECTED IN CONNECTION WITH REGIME'S EXERCISE IN POLITICAL INSTITUTION BUILDING WHICH HAS BEEN IN PROGRESS SINCE 1976.

2. FOUR OTHER PROMINENT ALGERIAN POLITICIANS ARRESTED AFTER THEY PUBLISHED AN ANTI-REGIME "APPEAL TO THE ALGERIAN PEOPLE" IN MARCH 1976 ARE STILL NOT ENTIRELY AT LIBERTY. THREE OF THEM, FORMER PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT (GPRA) PRESIDENT BEN YOUSSEF, BEN KHEDDA, HOCINE LAHOUEL AND CHEIKH KHEIREDDINE ARE STILL BELIEVED TO BE UNDER HOUSE

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ARREST, ALTHOUGH BEN KHEDDA IS PERMITTED CONSIDERABLE MEASURE OF ACCESS TO OUTSIDE WORLD. THE FOURTH, FERHAT ABBAS, LIKE BEN KHEDDA A FORMER GPRA PRESIDENT, IS REPORTED TO BE FREE TO TRAVEL WITHIN ALGERIA BUT NOT TO LEAVE COUNTRY. ABBAS, WHO IS IN HIS EARLY EIGHTIES, VISITED A WESTERN EMBASSY HERE SEVERAL MONTHS AGO TO SUPPORT THE VISA APPLICATION OF A RELATIVE, AND WAS OPENLY CRITICAL OF

REGIME AT THAT TIME.STEPHAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REPORTS, POLITICAL PRISONERS, POLITICAL LEADERS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Expiration:**  
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